Potato shoots

Brief summary:
In this experiment you will experiment with planting a potato in a shoebox with a small hole cut in it, and over several weeks watch as potato shoots emerge from the hole.

You will need:
- Help from an adult
- A shooting potato (one that has little white shoots growing out of it)
- A shoe-box
- Scissors
- Potting mix
- Rocks

What to do:

Step 1. Cut a small coin-size hole in the short end of the shoe-box. You can ask for help from an adult when cutting the hole.

Step 2. Put a handful of potting mix in the corner of the box at the opposite end from where you have made the hole.

Step 3. Lay the potato in the soil.

Step 4. Put the rocks in the box with the potato to create ‘obstacles’.

Step 5. Put the lid on the box and put it somewhere where there is plenty of light.

Step 6. After 4 weeks, open the box and you’ll see that the potato shoot has made it’s way around and over the rocks to reach the hole where the sunlight is coming in.

Take it further:

Have a look at our other experiments with plants - How do seeds grow? and Talk to your plants!

Big questions:
- What is the difference between a fruit and a vegetable?
- What other vegetables grow under the ground?
- What is the difference between a root and a tuber?